

Essential News

Latest news from the Essential Services Commission
May 2024

Welcome to Essential News, our regular update on key decisions, releases and events from the Essential Services Commission.

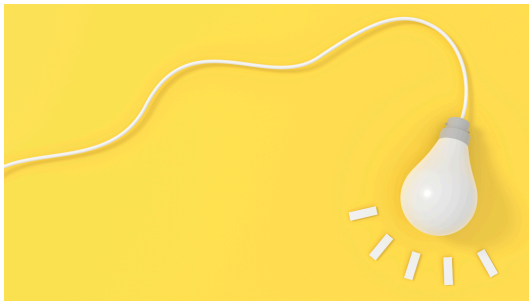
Victorian Default Offer 2024-25 final decision released

We released our final decision on the Victorian Default Offer electricity price, locking in lower prices for consumers and small businesses.

From 1 July 2024, the average rate Victorian Default Offer customers pay for their electricity will reduce by around \$100 (or 6 per cent) for residential customers and around \$260 (or 7 per cent) for small business customers.

We heard strong feedback from stakeholders that cost-of-living pressures continue to make it difficult for many in our community. Affordability and consumer protections remain a key focus for the commission.

[Find out more →](#)



New partnership to support energy and water customers experiencing family violence

We have formed a partnership with key leaders in family violence and economic abuse to develop better practice guides for energy and water businesses to support consumers who are experiencing family violence.

The guides, featuring the principles of Safety by Design, will help businesses identify risks and harms in their systems and processes.

[Read our media release →](#)



Chair Kate Symons to leave the commission

After eight years of service, Kate Symons has announced her departure from the Essential Services Commission as Chair and will conclude her current term on 30 June 2024.

[Read Kate's statement →](#)



'Cold call' telemarketing ban commences

A ban on 'cold-call' telemarketing under the Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) program took effect on 1 May 2024, with doorknocking to be banned from 1 August 2024.

The bans will protect consumers from unwanted marketing phone calls and visits about the VEU program, empowering consumers to choose whether they want to be contacted for marketing purposes.

Under the bans, businesses must obtain consent from consumers before telephoning or visiting them to market energy efficient upgrades, products and services under the VEU program.

Consumers should report breaches of the telemarketing ban to the commission via 03 9032 1310 or veu@esc.vic.gov.au.

[Read our news update →](#)





Powercor Australia Limited - licence application

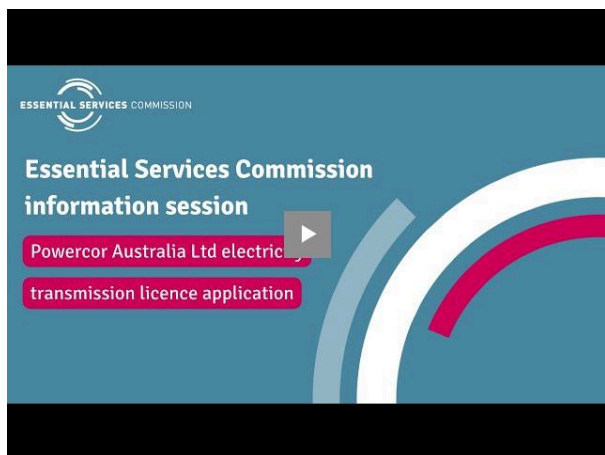
We are reviewing an application from Powercor Australia Limited for an electricity transmission licence in Victoria.

We recently held a public information session for stakeholders to find out more about Powercor's application, our licence assessment process and how to make a submission.

In case you missed the information session, you can watch the recording below.

Consultation is open until 11 June 2024.

[Find out more via Engage Victoria →](#)



New code of practice for gas distributors to apply from 1 October 2024

We released our final decision on the [Gas Distribution Code of Practice](#). The new code will take effect on 1 October 2024 and provides a fair and clear framework for gas network customers as Victoria transitions to net-zero emissions.

Importantly, the new code removes inefficient incentives for new gas connections.

From 1 January 2025, customers who may seek to establish a new gas connection will pay up-front installation costs for new gas connections, consistent with the current practice for new electricity and water connections.

[Find out more →](#)



Your consumer rights and the support available to you

Learn about your rights as a consumer in the sectors we regulate, including electricity and gas, local government, water, transport and the Victorian Energy Upgrades program.

[Find out more →](#)



Consultation

We're currently seeking feedback on the following:

- [Powercor Australia Limited – application for electricity transmission licence](#) - consultation closes 11 June 2024

[Visit our consultations page →](#)

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